

Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 NSC-10 CU-04 USIA-12 AID-20

DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PC-15 EB-11

COME-00 RSR-01 /110 W

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R 251551 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MONROVIA 2107

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR LI

SUBJ: YOUTH PARA

REF: STATE 070302

THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM HAS BEEN PREPARED UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE MISSION YOUTH AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND REFLECTS THE COUNTRY TEAM POSITIONS ON YOUTH AFFAIRS IN LIBERIA.

I. YOUTH CATEGROIES

A.

5 PERCENT YOUNG MILITARY OFFICERS

15 PERCENT YOUNG BUREAUCRATS

PROFESSIONALS IN THE :

10 PERCENT MEDIA

5 PERCENT LAW

5 PERCENT BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

5 PPERCENT ARTS AND LETTERS

5 PERCENT YOUNG LEADERS

10 PERCENT LEADERS OF NATIONAL YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS

(URBAN YOUTH COUNCIL)

15 PERCENT UNIVERSITY STUDENT LEADERS

15 PERCENT UNIVERSITY FACULTIES (UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA
AND CUTTINGTON COLLEGE)

10 PERCENT YOUNG LEADERSHIP AMONG DISSIDENT MOVEMENTS

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(FIRST MOVEMENT)

B. THE URBAN YOUTH COUNCIL IS THE MOST VIABLE YOUTH ORGANIZATION IN LIBERIA; ITS MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES SOME PROMISING

YOUNG PEOPLE AND IT POSSESSES A CAPACITY, ONLY marginally realized to date, to make an impact in Liberia. The first movement, although very vocal to date, is too new to rate accurately at present. Under President Tolbert the average age of middle and upper- middle echelon bureaucrats has been lowered, and a number of young Liberians have assumed positions of responsibility and importance. The faculty of the University of Liberia is beginning to develop a corps of young Liberians who are popular with tier students and becoming increasingly vocal. Student leaders tend to be more apathetic and less concerned with issues of national importance than their fellow students in other African countries; however, they are beginning to be openly critical of the establishment. Liberian leaders of tomorrow tend to be educated abroad, and this pattern shows little likelihood of changing in the foreseeable future. The established (True Whig) political party provides virtually no forum for the development of youth leaders. Rewards and positions of influence and leadership come to the politically oriented only after many years of faithful service. The same limited scope to youth leadership occurs in the military.

In many categories, membership overlaps. For example, a number of significant youths are both members of the Urban Youth Council and the University student body. For many reasons these two organizations can be bunched in the definition of youth categories.

C. It seems unlikely at this point that Liberian youth will have significant impact, favorable or unfavorable, on US interests in the near future. To the extent they are involved in affairs outside their personal interests, Liberian youth show a greater concern for national development and progress rather than an interest in international relations. The first movement has some potential for creating a short- term impact on US interests, but it has yet to develop a unified political line and, given the broad spectrum of opinion its membership possesses, it might well never do so.

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II. OBJECTIVES

- A.
 - 5 PERCENT ASSURE ACCESS TO KEY FUTURE LEADERSHIP
 - 20 PERCENT CREATE AND MAINTAIN FAVORABLE ATTITUDES TOWARD US
 - 5 PERCENT PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING OF BROAD US GOALS AND POLICIES
 - 5 PERCENT INFLUENCE ATTITUDES ON SPECIFIC US INTERESTS IN LIBERIA
 - 15 PERCENT FOSTER CLIMATE CONDUCTIVE TO BILATERAL TRADE AND US INVESTMENT IN FUTURE YEARS
 - 15 PERCENT FOSTER CLIMATE CONDUCTIVE TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
 - 10 PERCENT ENCOURAGE COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

IN DEVELOPMENT AND REFORM

5 PERCENT ENCOURAGE PRAGMATIC, NON- IDEOLOGICAL APPROACHES
TO NATIONAL PROBLEMS

20 PERCENT THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH CONTACTS,
UNDERSTAND AND FOLLOW INCIPIENT POLITICAL AND
SOCIAL TRENDS IN THE SOCIETY

B. LIBERIAN YOUTH ON THE WHOLE TEND TO HAVE A RATHER FAVOR-
ABLE IMPRESSION TOWARD THE UNITED STATES. THEY LOOK TOWARD
AMERICA AS A LEADER IN CULTURE AND THOUGHT, AND THEY TEND TO
IMITATE THE LATEST AMERICAN FADS AND FASHIONS. THEY HAVE BEEN
LITTLE EXPOSED TO ANTI- US PROPAGANDA IN THEIR COUNTRY AND HAVE
REMAINED GENERALLY INDIFFERENT TO SUCH POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME
ISSUES AS THE VIETNAM WAR.

CONSEQUENTLY THE COUNTRY TEAM FEELS THAT ITS GENERAL POSI-
TION SHOULD BE ONE OF KEEPING WELL INFORMED ON YOUTH ACTIVITIES
AND DEVELOPMENTS WHILE MAINTAINING A DISCREET DISTANCE FROM ANY
ACTUAL POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT WHICH MIGHT ONLY BE DISRUPTIVE.
THE OBJECTIVES EMPHASIZED SO REFLECT THIS BELIEF AND THE LAST
OBJECTIVE IS ACCORDINGLY WEIGHTED. OUR GOALS ARE CHARACTERIZED
BY THE WORDS QTE ENCOURAGE UNQTE AND QTE UNDERSTAND UNQTE RATHER
THAN QTE DIRECTLY INFLUENCE UNQTE, AND THEIR GENERAL INTENTION IS TO
CREATE A RESERVOIR OF YOUNG PEOPLE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD
THE US SO THAT WHEN THEY DO QTE COME INTO THEIR OWN UNQTE WE
CAN EXPECT A CONTINUATION OF THE GENERALLY FRIENDLY AND MUTUALLY
BENEFICIAL RELATIONS WHICH HAVE EXISTED IN THE PAST. TO EXERT
INFLUENCE UNNECESSARILY ON THE YOUNG MAY ONLY LEAD TO A SUSPI-
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TION AND HOSTILITY WHICH WOULD BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE.
COUNTERACTING THIS GENERALLY FAVORABLE ATTITUDE HELD BY
LIBERIAN YOUTH TOWARD THE US THERE REMAINS ONE PROBLEM AREA--
BLACK- WHITE RELATIONS IN THE US AS PERCEIVED BY LIBERIANS OF
ALL AGES. LIBERIANS HAVE HAD DRUMMED INTO THEIR HEADS FROM
EARLIEST CHILDHOOD THAT THEIR FOREBEARS ESCAPED FROM A LAND OF
SLAVERY AND OPPRESSION TO A LAND WHERE THEY COULD BE FREE AND
COULD GOVERN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS AS A SOVEREIGN NATION. THIS
FACT ONLY BECOMES SIGNIFICANT WHEN LIBERIANS RELATE THAT NEGA-
TIVE HISTORIC EXPERIENCE IN THE US WITH THE PRESENT DAY REPRE-
SENTATIVES OF THAT SOCIETY WITH WHICH THEY COME IN CONTACT.
THAT CONNECTION CAN AND HAS BEEN MADE, AND IT IS AN UNFORTUNATE
BUT TRUE FACT THAT THE FEW OUTSPOKEN CRITICS OF AMERICA TODAY
ARE ALMOST INVARIABLY YOUNG LIBERIANS WHO HAVE RECENTLY STUDIED
IN THE UNITED STATES AND HAVE HAD UNPLEASANT EXPERIENCE THERE
THEY CONSIDERED RACIALLY MOTIVATED. FOR THIS REASON THE SECOND
LISTED OBJECTIVE IS ALSO GIVEN PRONOUNCED EMPHASIS.

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INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 NSC-10 CU-04 USIA-12 AID-20

DODE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 PC-15 EB-11

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FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7876

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MONROVIA 2107

III. RESOURCES

A.

10 PERCENT CU EDUTATIONAL TRAVEL GRANTS

CU FULL- YEAR ACADEMIC GRANTS TO:

20 PERCENT FOREIGN STUDENTS

15 PERCENT AMERICAN PROFESSORS (LECTURING)

10 PERCENT CU SHORT- TERM AMERICAN GRANTEES

20 PERCENT AID TRAINING PROGRAM

5 PERCENT MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAMS

5 PERCENT DOD OR MAP ORIENTATION TOURS IN US FOR

FOREIGN MILITARY OFFICERS

15 PERCENT USIA CULTURAL AND INFORMATIONAL PROGRAMMING

A. THE AREA OF ATHLETICS AND SPORTS HAS BEEN LEFT RELATIVELY UNTOUCHED BY THE US TO DATE IN LIBERIA DESPITE THE FACT MANY YOUNG PEOPLE ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN ATHLETICS AND FOLLOW THE LOCAL TEAMS WITH GREAT INTEREST. THERE IS A GREAT SHORTAGE OF SPORING EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES HERE AND IT MIGHT BE DESIRABLE FOR THE USG TO MAKE AVAILABLE CERTAIN BASIC EQUIPMENT WHICH THE VARIOUS SPORTING ORGANIZATIONS PRESENTLY LACK.

B. PRIVATE EXCHANGE PROGRAMS INCLUDING OPERATION CROSSROADS AFRICA HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED IN THE PAST, AND THE EXCHANGES CAN CERTAINLY BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE IN SOME FASHION OR OTHER. THESE PROGRAMS MAY BE EFFECTIVE IN FORTHCOMING US YOUTH OBJECTIVES PROVIDED THE ORGANIZATIONS SPONSORING THEM ARE ADEQUATELY FINANCED AND PROPERLY ORGANIZED. GIVEN THE LARGE AMERICAN
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PRESENCE IN LIBERIA, HOWEVER THE COUNTRY TEAM IS UNCERTAIN WHETHER USG SUBSIDIZATION OF INCREASED EXCHANGE PROGRAMS WOULD BE EITHER SUITABLE OR FINANCIALLY JUSTIFIABLE IN TERMS OF RESULTS.

C. THE PEACE CORPS MAKES A LARGE AND SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TOWARD MISSION YOUTH OBJECTIVES THROUGH ITS IMPUT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIBERIA AND THROUGH THE PERSON- TO- PERSON CONTACT

OF MANY VOLUNTEERS WITH YOUNG LIBERIANS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. VOLUNTEERS ARE OFTEN THE ONLY CONTACT YOUNG PEOPLE OUTSIDE MONROVIA HAVE WITH THE UNITED STATES AND THE IMPRESSION THEY MAKE ON THE PEOPLE THEY MEET CAN HAVE LASTING AND SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. THE PEACE CORPS FILLS A GAP WHICH COULD NOT BE EASILY ACHIEVED BY OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE MISSION. FOR THIS REASON, PC SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MAJOR, THOUGH UNLISTED, RESOURCE.

IV. RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF QTE YOUTH UNQTE

A. THE COUNTRY TEAM WOULD RATE THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH QTE LOW UNQTE FROM THOSE CATEGROEIS LISTED.

B. LIBERIA IS NOT A YOUNG COUNTRY NOR ARE ITS LEADERS YOUNG MEN. DESPITE SOME INNOVACTIVE MEASURES BY PRESIDENT TOLBERT IN THE PAST TWO YEARS WHICH GIVE GREATER SCOPE TO THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, LIBERIA' S SOCIETY IS A CONSERVATIVE ONE IN WHICH THE YOUNG FEEL MUCH PRESSURE TO CONFORM WITH THE ACCEPTED PATTERNS OF THOUGHT AND BEHAVIOR ESTABLISHED BY THEIR ELDERS IN ORDER TO QTE SUCCEED UNQTE. THOSE YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SUCCESSFUL CAREERS TO DATE IN THE GOVERNMENTAL BUREAUCRACY, BUSINESS THE PROFESSIONS OR THE MILITARY ARE HANDLED IN THE SAME FASION AS ARE THEIR ELDERS BY MISSION COUNTERPARTS. THIS LEAVES THE YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS WHICH WHILE BEING NEWSWORTHY RECENTLY STILL REMAIN NASCENT WEAK AND IN THE CASE OF THE FIRST MOVEMENT SUSPECT BY THE LIBERIAN ESTABLISHMENT AND THERFORE LARGELY CIRCUMSCRIBED.

C. THESE FIGURES ARE OF NECESSITY QUITE CRUDE AS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ISOLATE ACTUAL TIME SPENT ON YOUTH FROM OTHER, REALTED ACTIVITIES.

1. PERCONNEL TIME

(A) COUNTRY TEAM FINDS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE
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ANH MEANINGFUL OR REALISTIC STATISTICAL ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION.

(B) CONTACT WORK 40 PERCENT
REPORTING 30 PERCENT
PROGRAM WORK 30 PERCENT

(C) STATE 25 PERCENT
USIA 50 PCERENT
AID 15 PERCENT
DOD 10 PETRENT
PART (C) OF COURSE ESCLUDES PC, WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE BE A DISTORTING FACTOR.

2. 60 PERCENT OF CU BUDGET (WHICH INCLUDES A SUBSTANTIAL AID FINANCIAL IMPUT)
30 PERCENT OF USIS BUDGET
5 PERCENT OF AID/ L BUDGET

5

PERCENT OF MAP BUDGET
MANFULL

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